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THOMAS

to Barry Hannah

RONDO-BURLESKE is going back in overages, Bee Jay” he says and I know just what he’d be thinking to himself. “‘Please have little Bee Jay Wheeler come to the personnel manager’s office’” Vic had to read it out loud, read it out loud word for word off the invoice he was holding up off the counter to everybody sitting there at the pick-up desk (including two or three drivers from jobbers out of town) and then look up at me to say: “Makes you sound like a storybook character, Jay. ‘Little Bee Jay Wheeler.’” And they laughed — I’m sure that most all of them laughed — they had to laugh “with” me as I went away, went away with my truck and the one damn wheel that won’t touch the floor that Frank says you just got to live with, him being somebody that’s got to *wheel* a truck around every day all day (“Go to five and you won’t be wheeling around little trucks any more, little Wheeler” he says to me.) I know just what the guy would be thinking as I took off with my truck rattling, echoing off the ashy concrete slab underfoot and moving aside them whispering cobwebs hanging down up overhead to hit the dusty metal ceiling and then come back down through holes in the welded iron floor where the eyes of people in sections upstairs can wink down at you, and you got to guess they’re smiling one of them rotten smiles of theirs too

with the wink because the floor breaks faces up into so many dim little pieces. (Stare at one place long enough and everything starts to move towards you . . .) Once upon a time (he'd be saying to himself) once upon a time little Bee Jay Wheeler was working in section four (Bill I'd like you to meet Jay Wheeler. Jay — Bill Somethingorotherman. This is where we keep your paint, keep your paint, keep your paint. This is where we keep your paint so neatly on the shelves. Until come college kid driving truck for his dad for the summer up and drops a gallon and explodes a mess of lacquer thinner at the foot of the steps out back of the cage where everybody's walking, and it's Frank to the rescue with fuller's earth and no harm done. Until little Bee Jay Wheeler stumbles into his very own overloaded stalling truck and has to get Frank out of his easy chair waaaay up front of the warehouse. Having to listen to all the applause Frank's four good buddies in section five got to give to me and Frank as I go leading him back to the mess I made — and only Frank is doing the smiling and the waving back at them. . . . I say he was working along in section four in paint in the back of the warehouse and only doing what was expected of him when he was paged over the intercom, Victor Partsgopher speaking. When he'd waddled his small self back to the parts counter — pushing Mister Hobbledytruck all the way —

Victor Partsgopher read the note some secretteller had printed out on a section-four invoice under the part number and part description (Let the electric brain do the thinking for you too.) Read it out loud in front of everybody wasting their good time shitting there smoking their cigarettes and usually somebody else's one after the other, and drinking their coffee-flavored styrofoam took out from the diner up the street because drivers were not allowed past the parts counter (now it's a cage the size of a closet with a blank invoice taped up to one of the uprights supporting the chicken wire saying Home Sweet Home — right next to the swinging electric clock with that stub of a second hand spinning in free air and right over them black hands crawling underneath it damned invisible, woodworms under the floors of home because a warehouse is forever, failed prototype for a special economy clock with no need for a bezel because the hands spun around too fast for the dust to settle on them) and these few good men and true were stuck in that cage because of new regulations imposed to slow down thievery from inside — as if a speed limit sign would slow down any one of them on land sea or air where they got to cup their hands to keep the breeze from blowing out their matches.

Until the door slams shut — in the wind from outside or from Vic's bellowing mouth, paperwork under whitening hand — door that only opens one way. Vic and Dave and Steve and a driver or two from a jobber that don't pick up too often and don't know the guys too good who'll stand stiff in the open doorway behind the locals till another local crowds in the cage and bellows a big "Hi!" to Vic like the two of them ain't seen each other for years and asks Vic if he wouldn't mind doing something for him and Vic says "Chore" he will, or the driver will stand there stiff till Vic says something — and then the poor guy starts the Big Hurry-up and Wait by picking at his fingernails, and Vic starts by taking his cigarettes from his shirt pocket and removing one cigarette from the pack and putting the pack back in his pocket while putting the one cigarette in his mouth in one smooth unhurried motion up and down and side to side, clapping his pants pockets for matches and feeling along the counter and looking left and right for the matches he's got to have till somebody says "Here" and gives him a light, Vic telling the poor nail-picking fellow he's going to have to wait a minute before Big Vic can walk the maybe fifty feet to the conveyor to get his parts for him — impossible thing to do without the smoke pouring out of him like smoke pours off of slicks on a big block jumping from a start (But at four o'clock exactly won't you hear Big Vic squeal his chary four-fifty-four right out of here of course.) These gentlemen of the jury having not one good thing to say about nothing except for drinking (what they was drinking all weekend long and with who they was drinking it with and how they forgot what they was drinking and with who they was drinking it with and left the guy with no ride home to momma and exactly who they left with and how they got home or whose couch they woke up on, not remembering for the life of them how they got there) and which one of their buddies's barmaidens they'd borrowed for the evening while *he* was preoccupied with something else — in a hospital room maybe, watching the father who was the man that took him for his son laying stiff in a bed and dying without a sound or a motion in him. (Remember how the eyes did not even close? Do you think they go dark or just empty out of everything . . . do the eyes of people close who come back from the dead? Remember how you had to reach around that death mask to close them? after sneaking him that last smoke of his life? Because I was not the one to touch Jim dead, of all times.) This Vic would yank the invoice back from Bee Jay's curious fingers just as he was reaching to read it himself, and

read it out loud in front of everybody sitting there with a vee in their name: “‘Please have little Bee Jay Wheeler come to the personnel manager’s office,’” and say “Makes you sound like a storybook character, Jay” — without me ever giving him the right or no reason to begin with to call me by my first name for short but no worse than just plain Wheeler which Frank the personnel manager will not stop calling me because once I think somebody said he substitute-taught gym class of an odd morning up at F-M (take a look at the boobs drooping out of his tee shirt some day) and does it surprise you at all he’s always been doing somebody else’s job (I’d like to know just what his job is for once if it ain’t coralling young boys in the naked flesh into them hot quick wild showers after gym that for years have stood dry.) And there they are — mugs lined up mouths open in a laugh but it’s the kind of echoing laugh people laugh (echoing down in an empty house) the laugh those kind of people laugh when they really don’t like you (or figure they don’t like you because they see nobody else don’t like you — neither) but they still think they got to be civil so they pretend to be laughing with you instead of laughing at you? but how can they be laughing with you when you ain’t doing no laughing yourself?

When they laugh they might as well be laughing at the only place in town I could find, the only place in my town I could afford on what they start you out on here (come January I’ll be raising my castle to meet a lot of them other ones, boy) — a couple two or three rooms over the Downstairs Attic down on front street. I come home, I open up a can of SpaghettiOs into a pan on the stove with my groaning can opener (to give old Misses Farley a smirk to set the used clocks by before she closes up at night) and I sit there waiting for the weather and the odd movie or two as the stuff goes cold in a dish on my knees. Reach up for the light, pull the covers up around my ears and say my prayers. I say them for wheezing Jay and for old half-Catholic Jay only. I don’t care that you can’t pray for yourself Here. Who else is going to pray for you? Talk is cheap — talk is made pretty cheap any more, they don’t make talk like they used to — talk is cheap I say and it ends quicker than you can finish it. I mean usually I fall asleep in the middle of it and wake up next morning with its taste still in my mouth. Have you ever noticed how after somebody has ate (lunch say), how they’ll come back from lunch at ten after one (back to the warehouse let’s say) and they got to say something right up close to you, say something they think you’re going to take like you’re their best

buddy, something like “Heard the one about the old maid getting her life insurance physical?” (I overheard Frank one day telling this one to old Vic his blood brother at the parts counter, only catching the punchline) “ ‘I wouldn’t worry too much about it’ the doctor says. ‘Gets any bigger I’ll just remove it!’ ” and their breath will taste like an old penny? like thousands of people have been rubbing their dirty fingers on the guy’s tongue all morning? and now the guy’s decided to turn around and breathe it in your face and get it all over your tongue the easy way? Always after they’ve breathed in your face your mouth tastes just like theirs smelled a minute ago — only now you can’t *taste* it any more. Unless you walk outside to let the air get to your tongue (and you’d be a fool to think you’d find fresh air right outside of the warehouse with every blower coughing out bathroom stinks and cigar smoke and paint fumes) and you can’t be seen so much as sticking your head out an emergency door in the back in the middle of a busy afternoon or busy morning even and just to tell the difference. Mister Goldwatch doesn’t like that. Mister Goldwatch likes to see you looking busy. All you can do is try to remember how it tasted when you could still taste the odor of that mouth.

I can’t forget how Frank’s breath tasted. When I come in his office he stood right up like he always stands right up (and I ain’t seen the man stand up like that for nobody else even after deciding I’d make it a point every time I got to go up front to slow down my truck to quiet down the one rattly wheel down and look in his office through the big picture window just as somebody’s walking in to see him from behind the shelves) and Frank shakes my hand — he always has to shake my hand like he’s meeting me for the very first time (and I can’t remember now whether or not he shook my hand the first time I met the guy, come to see if they had any openings, if they happened to be hiring at the beginning of summer — because it wasn’t like somebody was standing there introducing us.) I had come to the man to acquire a job which of course you know from the last thing I wrote you during break, upstairs under the slow-whirling fans, sitting on a pallet up away from Somebody’s squirrely eyes looking down from cafeteria haven ground floor — because the highest nest is fifty yards away from here. And like with everything else since I left home (left the house I should say?) I had to go looking by myself and like Jim like a father would say supposedly used to say (you said — you still say it?) he said you live through everything by yourself no matter who and especially when you’re laying there in your deathbed and you can’t

speaking because you can't even move your mouth under that damn mask except to part your lips to take a drag, *and there you lay Jim the one good father he had, taking your last few minutes above ground and breathing your last precious breaths of this blessed air* and do you mind if I don't talk about this no longer because I can't reread what I'm writing my hand is so nervous (I know it because I can feel my heart beating against my wind) and I don't want you to think after all this time I'm nothing but some morbid bastard spending every last minute of daylight thinking about the way Jim went, thinking how the father and mother we never even got to see live died. (It don't matter if you know they ain't dead by now.) I don't.

What I spend my time thinking about is what Jim left to me. No I mean what reason I give him to leave me nothing. I always had to smoke behind his back — and crushed my last butt out in Community General's parking lot. I can't remember when I didn't smoke. I even dream about smoking as a kid when Jim would take me out to the garage to show me Big Engine. I always got a cigarette burning in my mouth when I dream about Jim carrying me out there on his shoulders, Jim reaching up to light his own cigarette off of mine. Don't even mention nothing about this to Nobody I'm asking you (as if I got to ask you) but why is it I could never take breathing car exhaust in the garage and the gas station bays like Jim could or Anybody else could, Clinton could? I'd blow a noseful of black slick into my handkerchief every time I would sneeze, always in front of a customer, pumping her gas — black that should have been what was left of you after lighting up one last time at the pumps, having filled yourself up with the fire to come. Black Jim used to mumble (I can understand him even now) he couldn't get out in the wash, and where was your mother (Jean I knew he meant) when you needed her. Besides that I smelled of gasoline and cigarettes to everybody else but myself except for maybe you and Jim and Ununcle Willy his twin stranger (Ma I mean Jean was gone by the time Jim put me to work, wasn't she) — smelled of it even after the empty station had sat for sale for a month with Willy waiting for the next up-and-coming young gas station manager to take the thing off his hands and replace it with a signed monthly keep. It had to be the smell of me Jim knew too good kept me from having to say something to him about it, kept him from saying anything to me about what I was to him. It was like he knew already — him old enough and sensible enough to know

what your smell meant you for — knew I wouldn't be much good to him. And so what was the sense of only passing the station on to one half of a corporation now that Willy was leaving the business for good? And what *was* the sense. Jim sniffed me out soon for not working on cars, and he was right — Jesus how could he be so right in what he saw. His clouding eyes had everything he saw in them back then. They was old, they must have gotten that film that got on them some time before Clinton come along. It must have been he couldn't see them tracks Clinton was always confusing up with somebody else's, Jim in and out of the house with Clinton so often — even calling him Benjy instead of Hammer in spite of what everybody else called him including you and me in front of Jim when Clinton wasn't there (and when Clinton *was* there then why the hell wouldn't the real Clinton stand up? and where in hell did he come up with Clinton from anyway?) Anyway Jim felt sorry for Clinton you could see (Jim must have been some kind of person to feel sorry for Hammer Clinton — who didn't ask for nobody's sorrow — and what greater love could there be than that) since even his own folks didn't want him, and I can see why not. Stealing the Cobra Jim give us special for our sixteenth birthday (*your* sixteenth birthday Jim figured it had to be) and stealing her with us along for the ride he told us he just had to take her for, squealing her tires and putting her into spins on these back dirt roads with us clenching the grit between our teeth and him opening her up down the Oran-Delphi strip and going low down through Delphi and going like a shot up Wormwood Hill and spinning her around right in the middle of Gooseville Corners of all places to get yourself and your brothers killed and burning right by the house again before you could remind yourself of what the hill and the town and the strip had looked like and cruising cool as a cat shit down the Cazenovia Road and down into town, laying on the horn button and giving the finger to people that knew us to look at us, winking at anybody that cared to look back at him, and driving us home as slow as the car could tolerate it — AND worst of all telling Jim we'd offered him the wheel and how he done his best to be careful with her her first time out of the parlor. I remember that night before I can remember anything, trying to remember something — you standing there in the driveway in the dusk shivering telling Jim everything Clinton had done and no more than what spoke for itself, Clinton saying "I know you, Jeff. I seen you going in the garage to check in on her every morning and I know how chary you like to keep her. You're

just a little bit wary with her yet too is all. I know how you feel,” and Jim saying “Let’s not hear nothing more about it.” *It wasn’t because of calm words you didn’t believe them, Jim. It was because of a kid with his head in his hands not old enough to even have a smell about him yet, screaming what Clinton had done and more than could speak with any sense about it. Which only convinced you he wasn’t old enough and sensible enough anyway to have his say without losing his head.* The truth is I couldn’t do what Clinton could do already when Jim took him in. He didn’t have to bring him up or teach him nothing or wipe his ass for him, none of that shit — he could just enjoy him like a son, enjoy him like a son already a grown man for him. I wasn’t what Jim expected I’d be I know, Jim knew it soon as I got a smell about me. And if I could have sniffed myself out a little earlier than I did I could have told him I wasn’t right for him and saved him all that shit, I could have saved him the wait to see all that time what I’d be good for, I could have saved him the wait for another Wheeler and one he didn’t need Jean to go get with him and one he didn’t have to bring up and wait to see what he’d be good for for and one that could work with him without waiting for him, I could have left before the station was starting to go under so it wouldn’t look like I was waiting like a looter waits for the business to go dark — like Willy twin cosignatory waited for the damned looter-in-law to come and clean Jim out for good so *he* could clean up. I left in the middle of Jim’s last night is what I done, *the kid waited around longer than he should have, Jim, and you knew it. And you kept your mouth shut about it till the night you could not stay around Here no longer.* Them pure white unworried-looking people tightening the plugs and adjusting the hoses and wires Jim couldn’t even feel let alone give a name for and a use for. I’ll tell you what they was there for. They was there so you and me could watch him die wheeze by fucking wheeze instead of hearing just a few final coughs from the next room in the middle of the night and seeing him laying in bed in peace next morning. Remember what them people up on that Indian hill asked us as we was coming out the room? as that lunatic orderly reached in the room to switch off the lights and leave the gray light slanting down on Jim behind a door creeping shut? asking us if they could do anything for us and if they could to just speak up? I wanted to say You can do one thing for us yes. You can take that fucking gas mask off of Jim’s face and shove it up the end that don’t breathe but you got to say what you got to say, don’t you. When Frank Personnel Manager of

the warehouse asked me that morning what *I* could do for him I says "Cars is all I know." And he says "You adverse to section four?" And I says "Four six or eight" but he just says "It'll be eight Monday morning when we see you. Don't get showing your smiling face around here no earlier or it won't be smiling much longer. If you're late you make it up Saturday morning. No overtime." And he slid out to jobber service without so much as a So where are we going drinking Friday night. And there they all were in there the whole bunch of them again this morning. Frank having popped me the question one more time — mouths open in a good laugh, me tasting fingers that have handled pennies on my tongue.

I have been afraid in the middle of the night to wake up in bed alone (and please try to keep this to yourself) I've been afraid to be alone in bed in the dark since I was a kid and woke up once in the middle of the night and couldn't stop swallowing. You remember that? Why do I even got to ask you you ask me. Well that ain't the end of it, and there ain't no end to it till the very end of it. I wake up now and I can't barely catch a breath, and I can't swallow to save my life. Somebody squeezing me around the chest it's like, somebody sitting on my chest to make me stop breathing in and out. I got to get up and out of bed and open a window, praying the air's dry and cool even when I know that it's not, even after I've sweated under the sheets or heard the rain rain on the roof. I gulp down a tall glass of cold water from the bottle of it I keep in the fridgerator, and then I feel better enough to get back into bed. I lay there imagining it's going to come on me again and then it might come one me again or it might not — I never can know. But when it's past the point where I can't remember even trying to remember what the sensation was like exactly, when I try to even force it on myself so I can fight it this time and lose to it once and for all then I know that it's over with for the night. Somebody squeezing you from behind or sitting on top of you — that don't get it, neither one of them. I can't tell you exactly what it's like if you never been through it. I won't even try to no more just because you ain't never mentioned it and probably don't know nothing about it. It's them paint fumes I got to tell you about — they're killing me every time I got to go in the paint room. They got this little room in the back of the warehouse where the lights are enclosed in gas-proof boxes that take five minutes to come on full so you can see what you've pulled, and blowers blowing out the fumes night and day you'd never see till they was exploding off your cigarette into your face. That can't happen to

me — red labels or no yellow signs. I have not touched one cigarette since Jim and Willy finally went their separate ways for real, and now Frank says there ain't nothing to worry about. But I seen jobber drivers staggering out of the warehouse with their boxes tipping in their arms because they ain't gotten used to that special warehouse atmosphere like we have. Frank just laughs and says they ought to work a real job for a change and see what it's like, his breath tasting forever of loose change in my mouth. I say stumble out to your truck and smile leaving.

What Frank wanted to ask me was if I wanted to work in section five instead of four with the pipes and mufflers and the cases of oil and antifreeze and the heavy chassis parts. I think he was just trying to flatter me with that Wheeler nonsense again — that I could heft and lug anything anybody in section five now could lift and carry. But he calls me Bee Jay at the end of it this time: “. . . , Bee Jay?” like I was a little kid by the way he says it. He was trying to say like I was just a kid still compared to him and Vic and his yokel locals and the big boys in section five, and the way he was going to say it was to call me Bee Jay. Little Bee Jay Wheeler is what them pissy broads got started up in the Bubble Chamber of the whorehouse they call it for their big fat rear ends from sitting down on the job all day long, from having five kids and a daddy that's just as hard to buy in the pants for as you are. Sometimes even when they page me over the Piss-Alley system they'll say “Would little Bee Jay Wheeler please go to a box please. Little Bee Jay Wheeler,” repeating the name like they always feel they have to when somebody's being paged (so's everbody else's cocked-up ear can come back down relieved). And fighting over who's going to page me because of it! I can see it out in the warehouse, I can hear it through the box before it even starts talking next to me. (I wonder how long they fought over who'd print out that impolite invoice today for all ears to hear and all eyes to see but mine? because my eyes was looking at what they was doing and not down the gutter where they knew enough to expect it'd be flowing with their piss.) I told Frank in not one uncertain term I did not get along with the guys in section five and I did not care to work alongside of them day out and day in and listen to all the crap they got to give me the whole time. (I didn't say the thing about listening to their crap. Frank seemed to smell it without me saying it.) I think Frank is just trying to do the guys in five a favor by giving then a whipping boy, somebody to pick on so the job of loading up delivery trucks full of greasy and oily and dusty and

clumsy and heavy pipes and mufflers and cases of oil and antifreeze and crankshafts and driveshafts — to make their filthy jobs seem to go faster between punching in and dropping everything (clang!) for lunch and wandering (usually rushing) back (on Friday after cashing their checks which they was too busy to do during break) and punching out seem to go faster. My job in the meantime would seem to last an entire week every day — with every four o'clock buzzer like the beginning of one more weekend much too short, a whole week of work in every day of getting picked on, the same long wait for time free. "You'd be moving up a number" Frank says to me. Can you believe it? You'd believe it if you knew how chummy Frank is with the guys in section five — the section he's got to walk through to get to the cage from his office, dodging somebody spreading the heavy green dust they spread there for sweeping up the dust with, dodging away in the shelves from the bell of the forklift and smiling up at the driver twisted around to watch out for him, dodging a smiling boy in the aisle with his pen and his invoices in hand and his stickers dangling off of him with Frank's momentary hand on the guy's back — with them guys and Vic and company is *he* ever chummy. I wouldn't be surprised if even he (even the personnel manager of all angelic people) if he was the one that wrote them words over the urinal in the john. I wouldn't be surprised if it was him who wrote them words over the urinal on the end towards the corner Frank knows I always like to use because it seems like every time I go to take a simple piss there he is combing what's left of his hair like he's twenty years younger than he really is again — and of course while I'm standing there waiting for myself to let go (and it always takes me longer when somebody else is there) he's combing his hair longer than his pretty face even wants him to. And I know he's looking at me in the mirror, and I know he's got to be looking at me in the mirror when he says "Section five, Wheeler?" and I says "Go fuck yourself, Frank" like one of his buddies in section five would say to somebody that hired them — and Frank just laughs, not looking at me no more, and leaves. "Bee Jay — Bee Jay Lives Up To His Name" let's say it says. "And at Jobber Cost." It's still up there to make a fool out of the guy that wrote it. I won't say what it says because you can imagine for yourself what it says and I for one are not about to dignify it by so much as repeating it. (People bare more in the bathroom than their backsides — they deliver all the little raspberries they been holding back on back order behind them puckering cheeks of theirs.) It's something more like

what some of them boys in the back of the warehouse must do on their lunch hours together, leaving all in one squealing car for God knows exactly where. It's something they got to be doing with each other going out together without their wives along if you ask me, with their unattached unworried buddies having nothing to lose. Take Vic. The guy's married if you can believe it. You wouldn't know it if you didn't know it. You don't know him like I know him. He still acts if you ask me like one of his unattached twenty-year-old buddies proud of the fact they can do the simplest thing in the world of raising a bottle to their mouth and swallowing what's inside of it. It must be the talking about it that makes you what you are — you got to talk about it right, talk it up right or you ain't no good. "He gets *eager* when he gets liquored up" and "You ain't shitting me, man." "Alcohol just puts me to sleep" and "That's what your wife tells us, old boy." And you got to laugh and at just the right time and not too loud and not too long. That's probably why they enjoy calling me Bee Jay so much. I don't laugh for breath number one at none of their extramarital jokes.

I unloaded my quarts and gallons and masking tapes and squeegees onto the parts counter off of my truck, and Vic takes them one by one and puts them down in a tray under the bench where he has to bend way over — "Ooooooh" he says — to reach it. "Looks like all of your numbers is going back in overages, Bee Jay." I could have said could I help it if other people had better things to do with their time than do their jobs and do their jobs right. Then he read the damn note out loud off the damn invoice. I looked him in the eyes, turned right around, and took my little empty truck and rattled away without saying one damn thing. I could have told you just what he was thinking though. "Did I say something wrong?" he says out behind me before he knows I'm out of earshot and they all do just what you'd think they'd do. And it's like they're laughing at me going back to a lousy couple of rooms or so at four o'clock, getting home just in time to open up one more can of SpaghettiOs and put it on the stove to heat up while I'm waiting for the weather to come on. Tomorrow's outlook calls for partly cloudy skies, clearing towards afternoon and becoming partly sunny — with the high in the mid eighties. Low tonight around seventy. Friday calls for continued sunny with scattered showers, winds calm and the high around eighty-five. Chance of precipitation is near ninety percent through Sunday. But only Bee Jay knows what to expect for the morning because he's the

only one to see what's coming under the covers of darkness. (No sun will fool me tomorrow.) And sit there watching my black and white movies with the dish going cold on my knees, with them blurry old movies where somebody turns around in the last five minutes and says "Jay, we're going to get you a new truck and put you up front in Section Number One with the ignition parts" as the snowy picture falls and falls and falls. (Frank would have said no anyway — I know he would.) And reach up for my light and pull up the covers, saying Oh God, I thank You so very much for the many whippings I have received today. Do not forgive me for more than a minute for keeping quiet and only doing what's expected of me. Scare me to death at night while other people are sleeping peaceful unalone so that I may wake up tomorrow and feel so much scareder of getting scared that I can't even say nothing back when they tell me what to do. Separate me from my father and mother forever why don't You and separate and kill off the ones that took me in and kill them slow, bleed them to death little by little from the inside, and at separate times. Jesus fucking Christ! fucking Mary and Joseph that never done it to bring *you* into the world for all I can tell, fuck me and save me from Here and come close to outdoing your Old Man as possible, show me that you care — especially in the hour of me not being able to breathe again if you like it that way. Amen that the last thought to fall asleep with is that nobody else can't hear that forecast, nobody else can't hear that movie, nobody else can't hear you praying — even when they're standing next to you, even when you're bumping heads. Because if anybody was to find this but you and pick this up and read it just coming home at night would be worse than having to get up every morning to go to work, to get up to a warehouse full of oily eyes and filthy mouths. Every night, every weekend couldn't go fast enough, I couldn't get the window open fast enough! if somebody like Frank heard everything you heard and everything you said and read everything you buried in the trash barrel and then they'd all have something to